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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MEMORY REDUNDANCY IN A MICROPROCESSOR**

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**G11C 7/00** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **365/200; 365/49; 365/189.02**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** ..... **365/200, 365/49, 189.02, 189.07**

See application file for complete search history.

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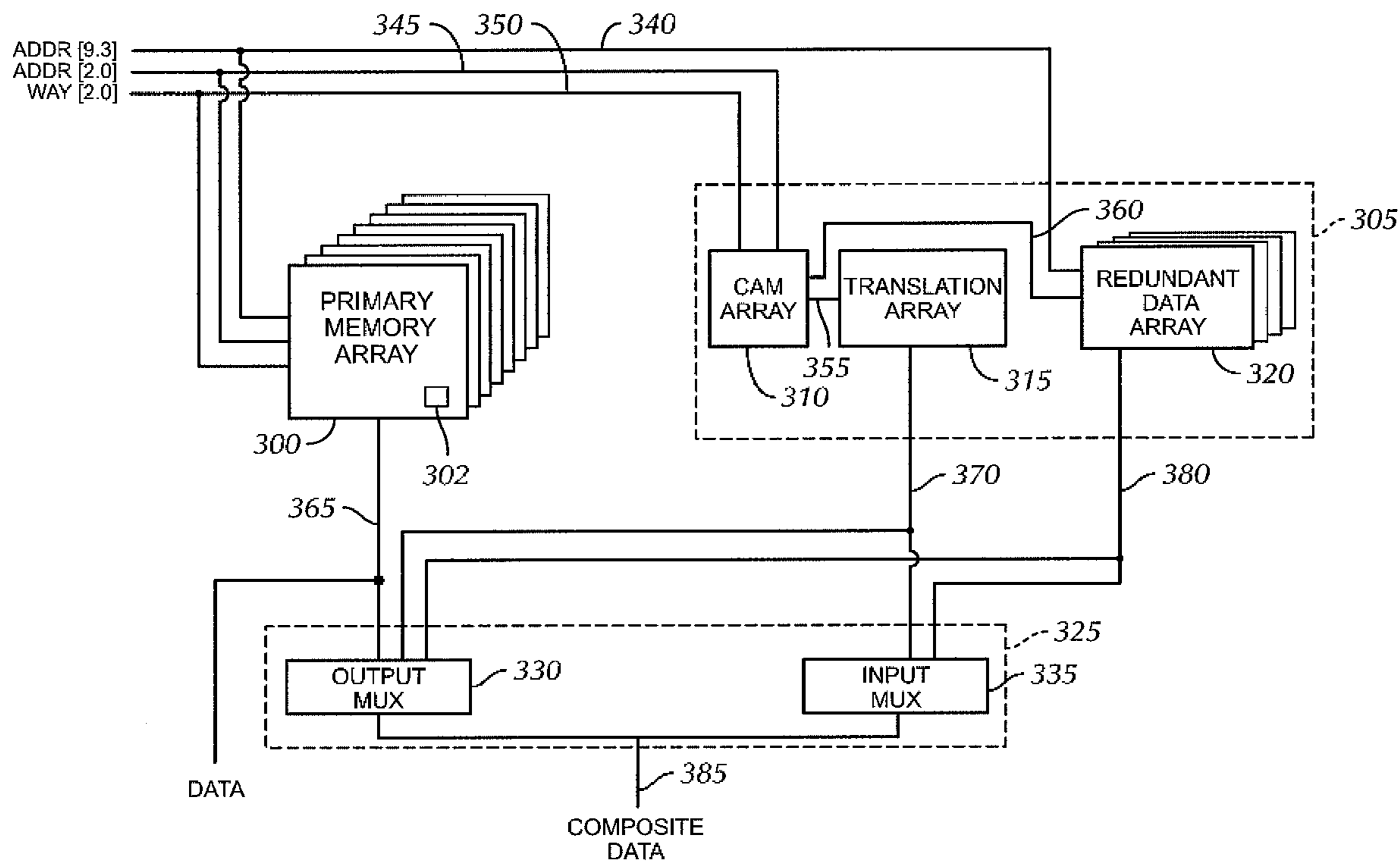
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus for redundancy of a memory array includes a primary memory array including a plurality of memory cells, one or more of which are defective. A redundant array includes a CAM array that includes a plurality of memory cells. The CAM array is addressed by the address of a defective memory location within the primary memory array and provides a match identification and a resource identification. The redundant array also includes a translation array wherein an offset to configure an input/output multiplexer is stored. The redundant array also includes a redundant data array including a plurality of memory cells wherein one or more memory cells of the redundant data array are used instead of one or more defective memory cells of the primary array.

**20 Claims, 8 Drawing Sheets**



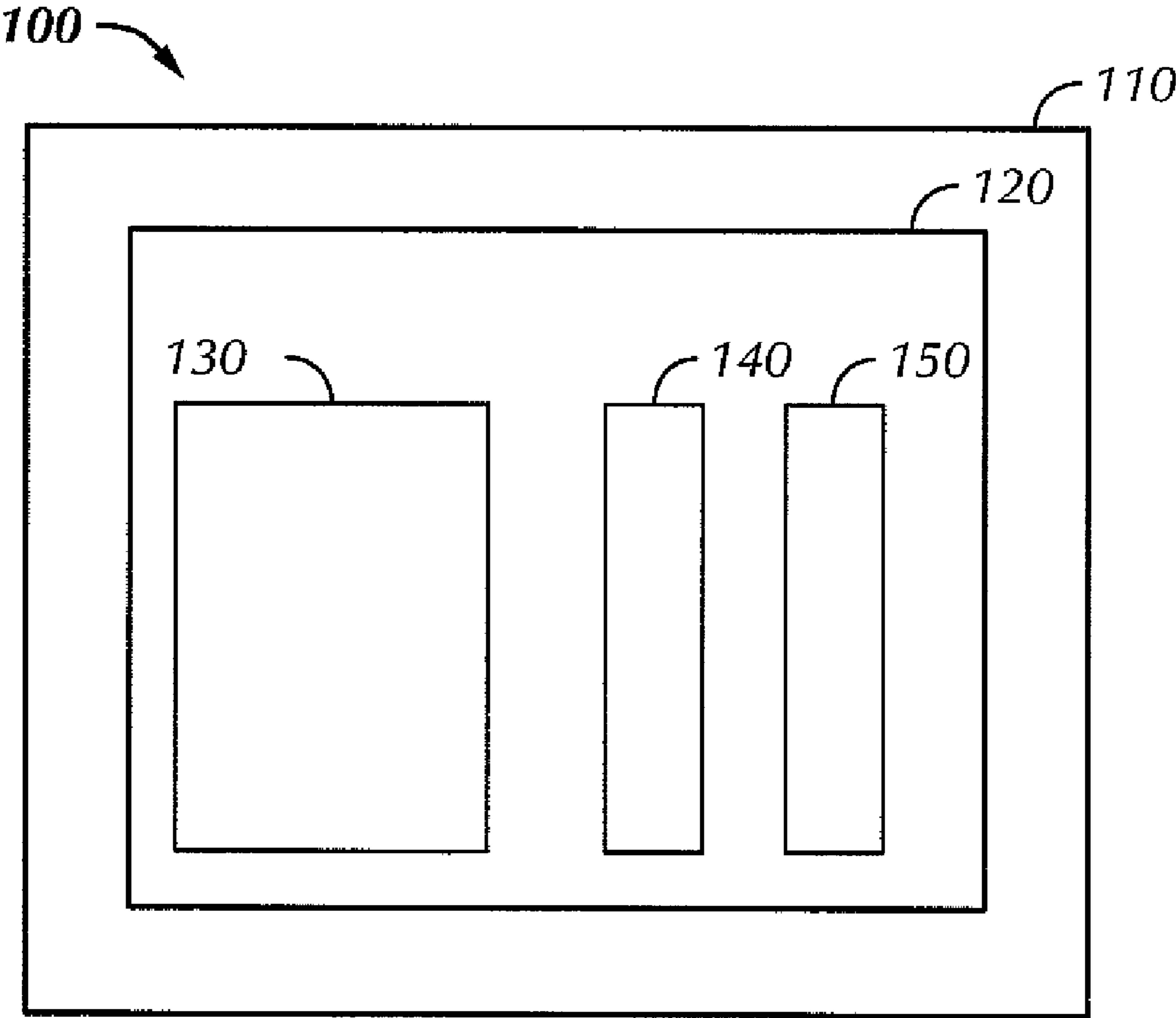


FIG. 1

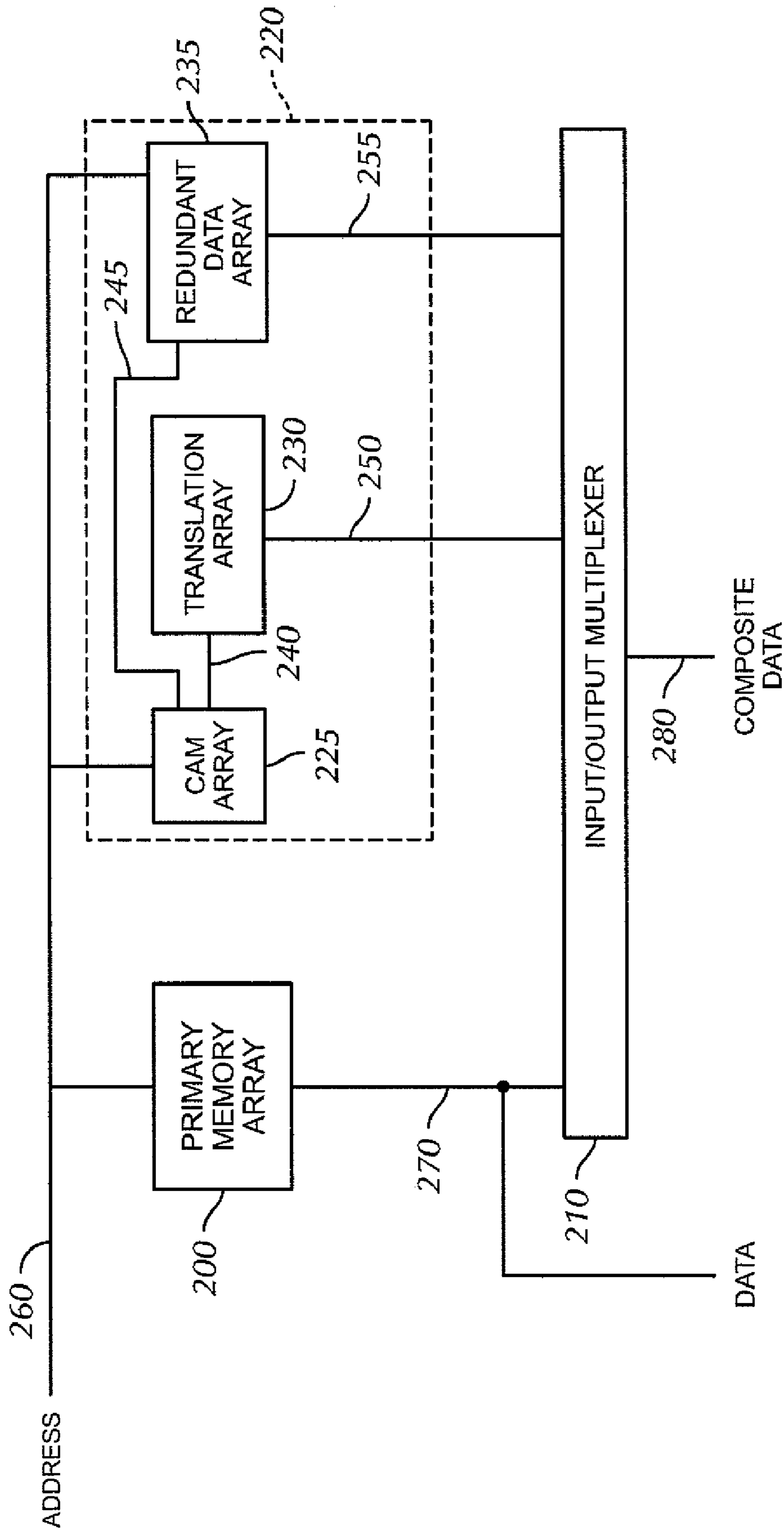


FIG. 2

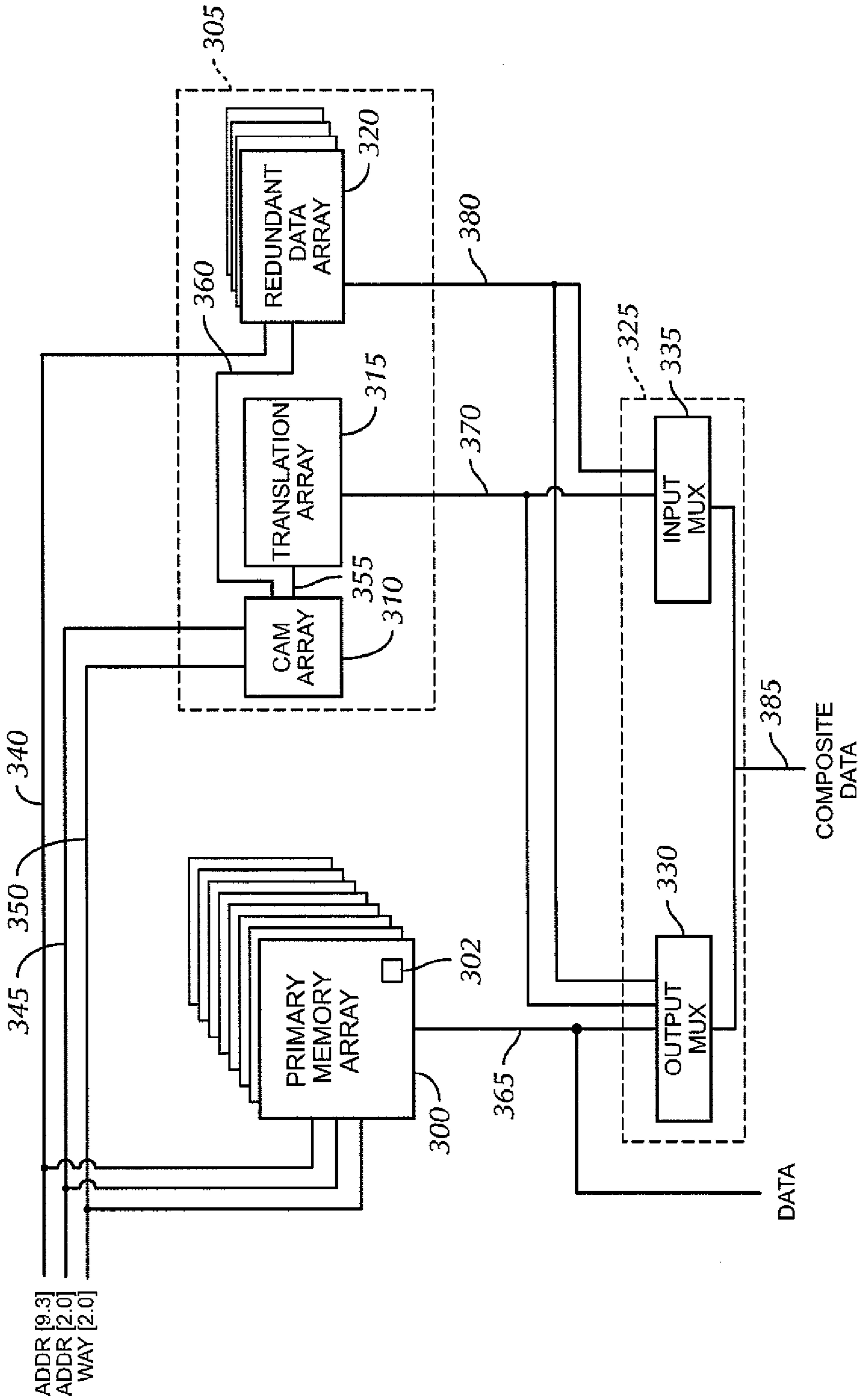


FIG. 3

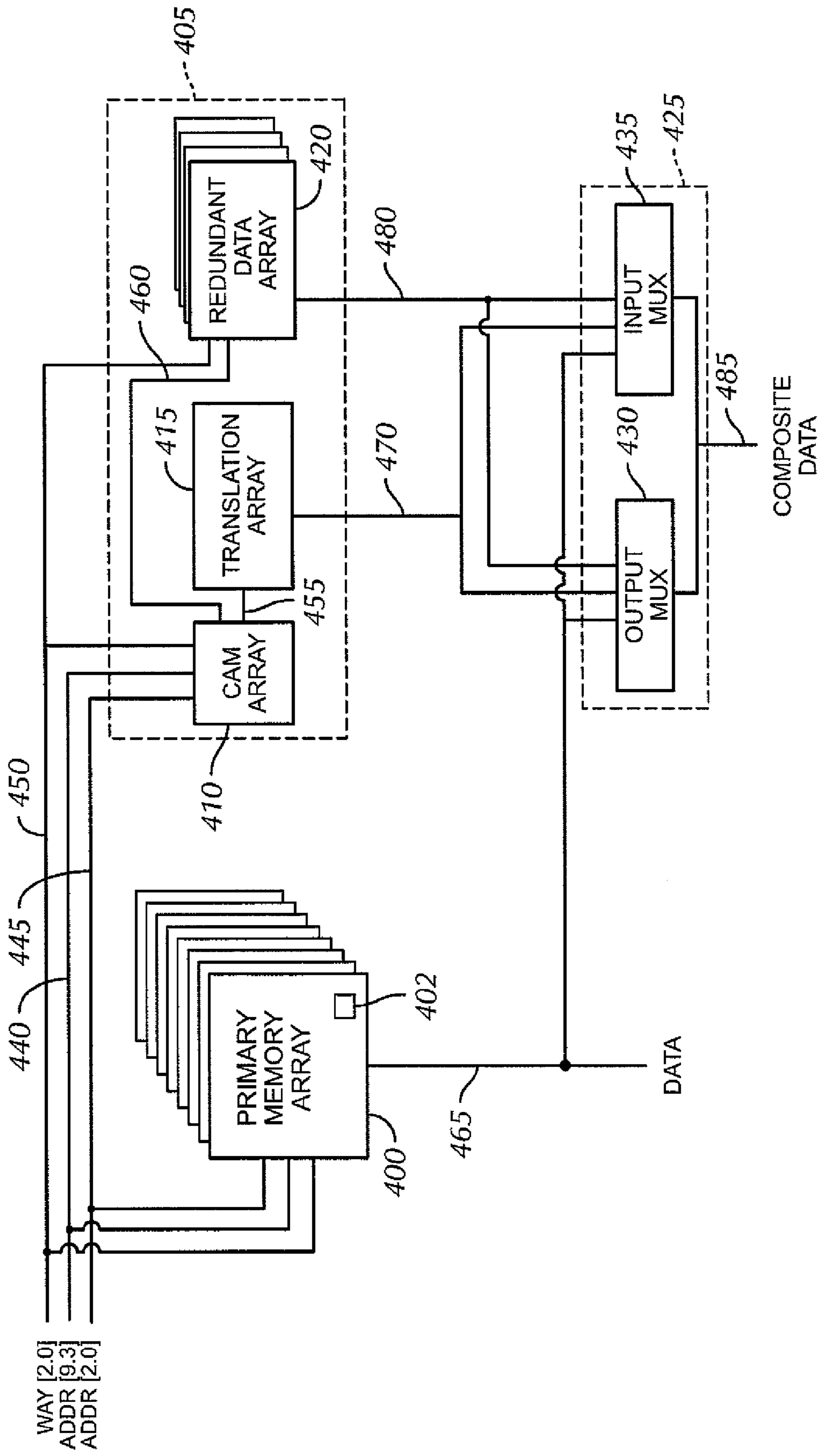


FIG. 4

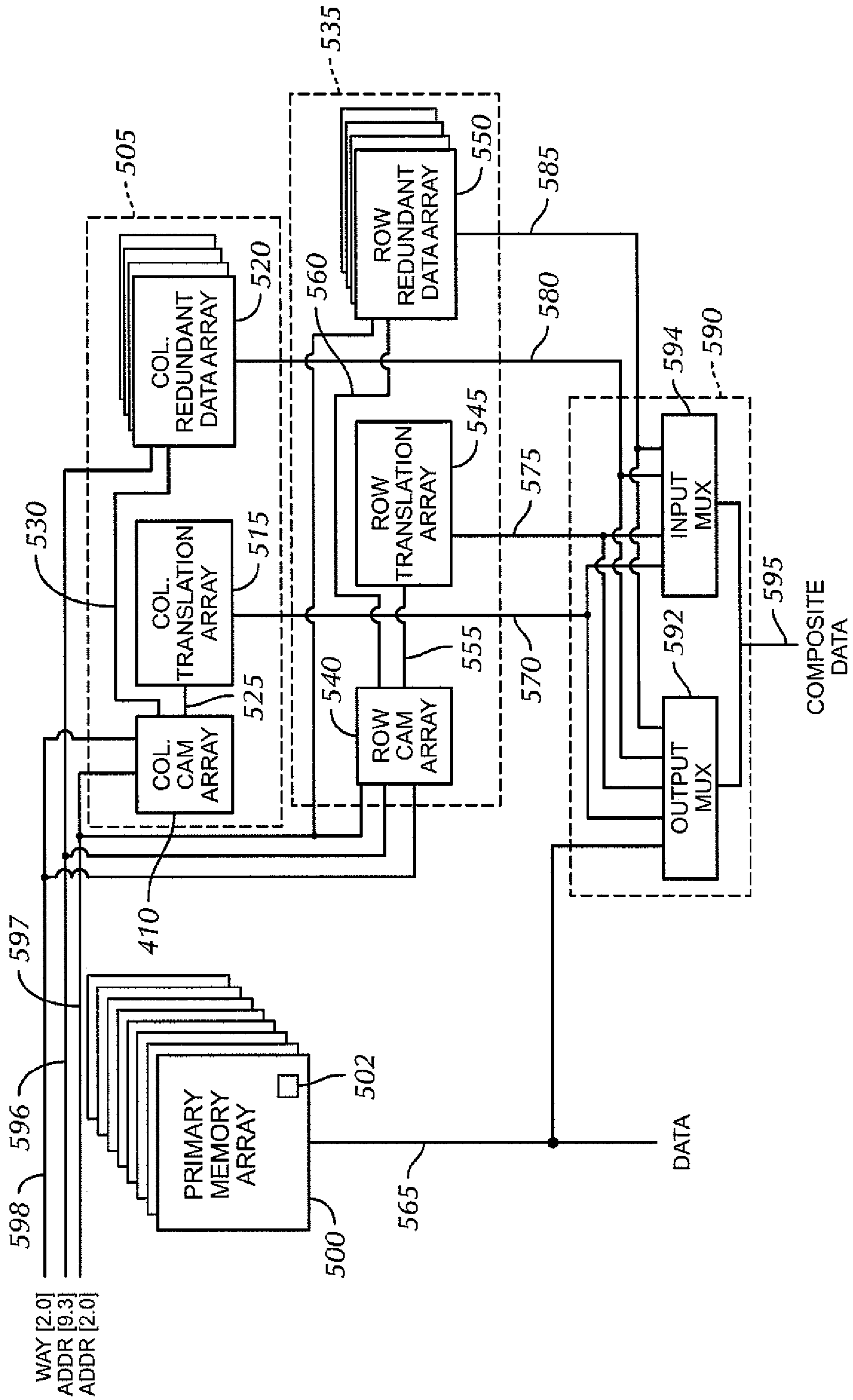
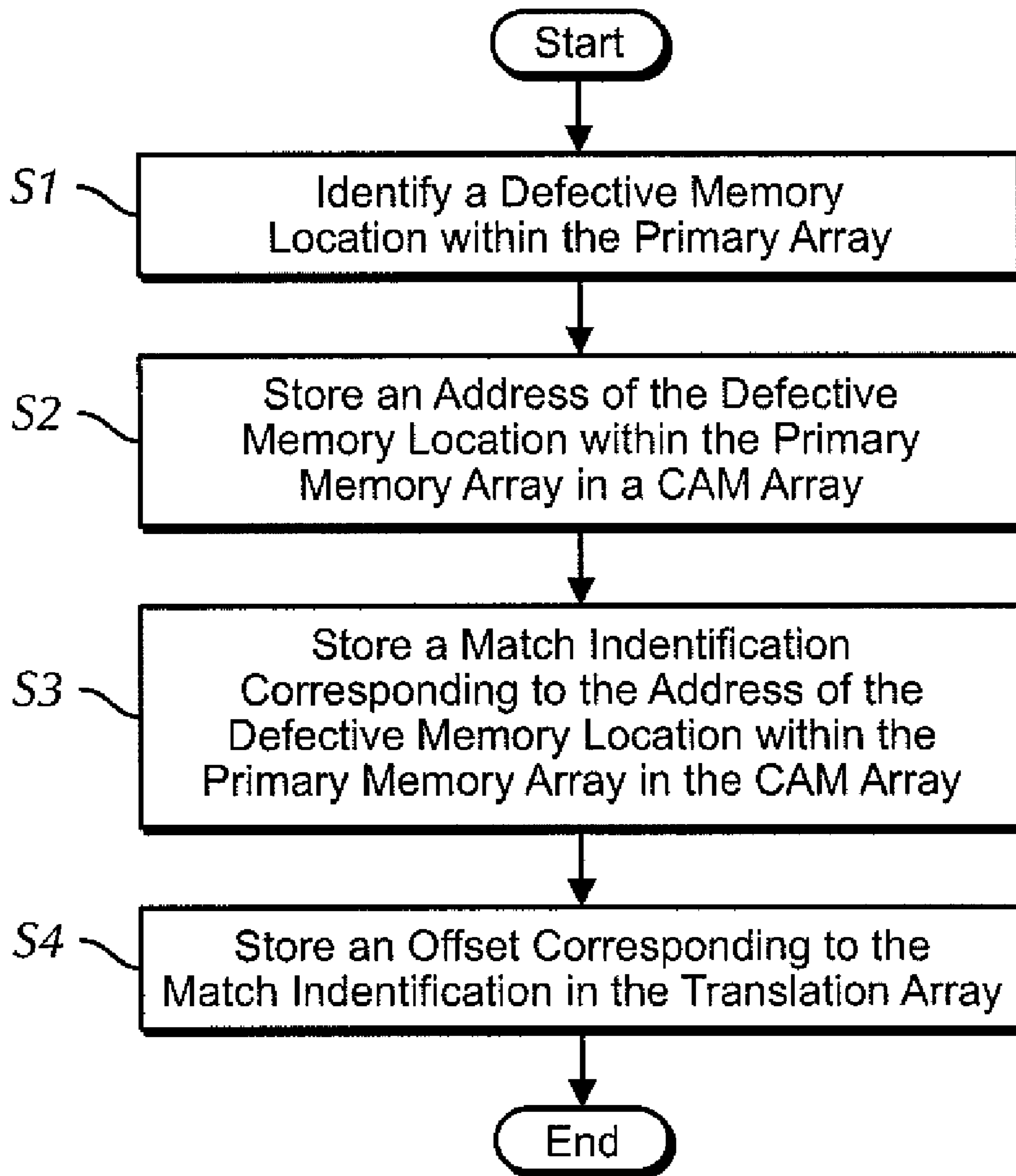


FIG. 5

**FIG. 6**

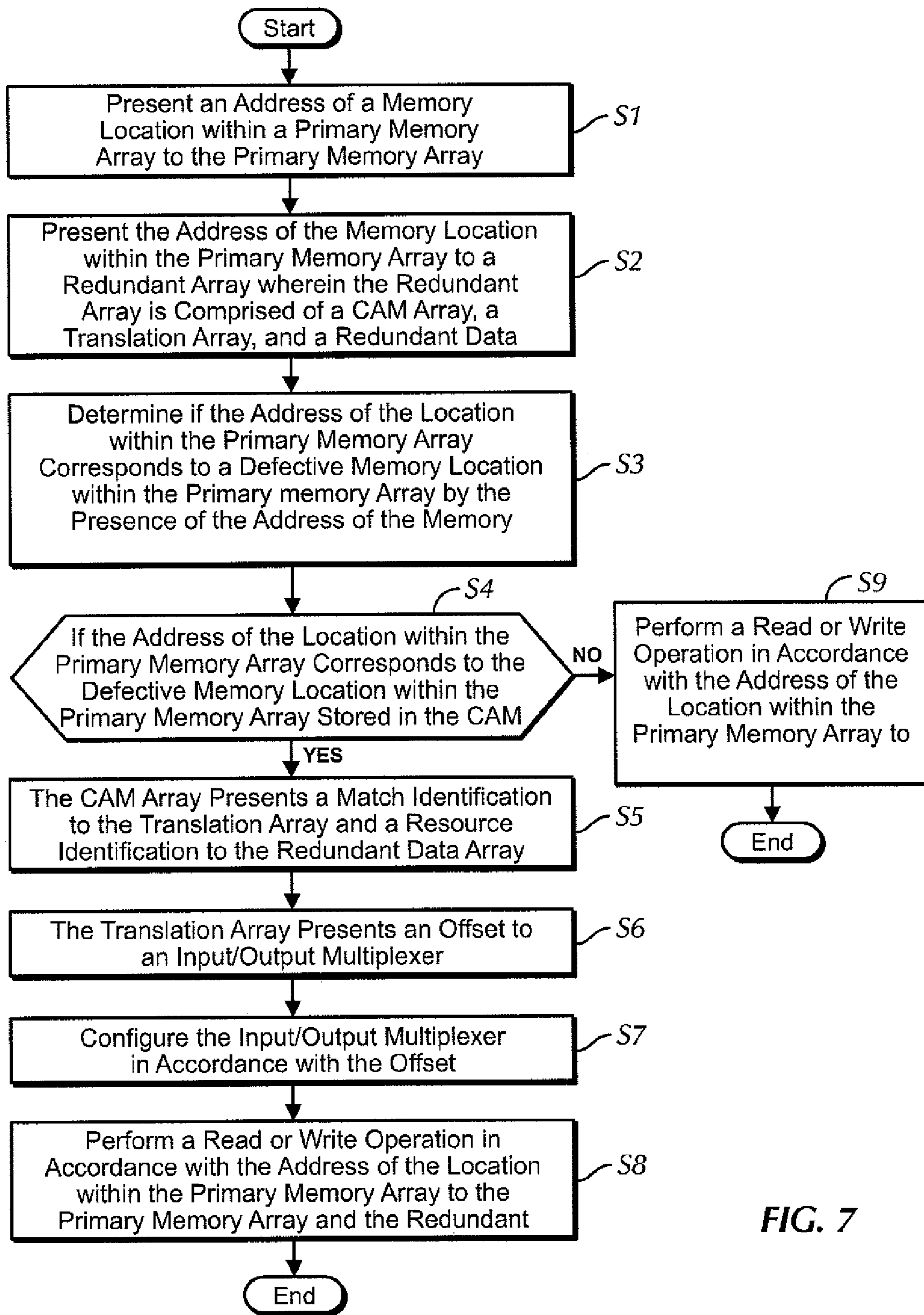


FIG. 7



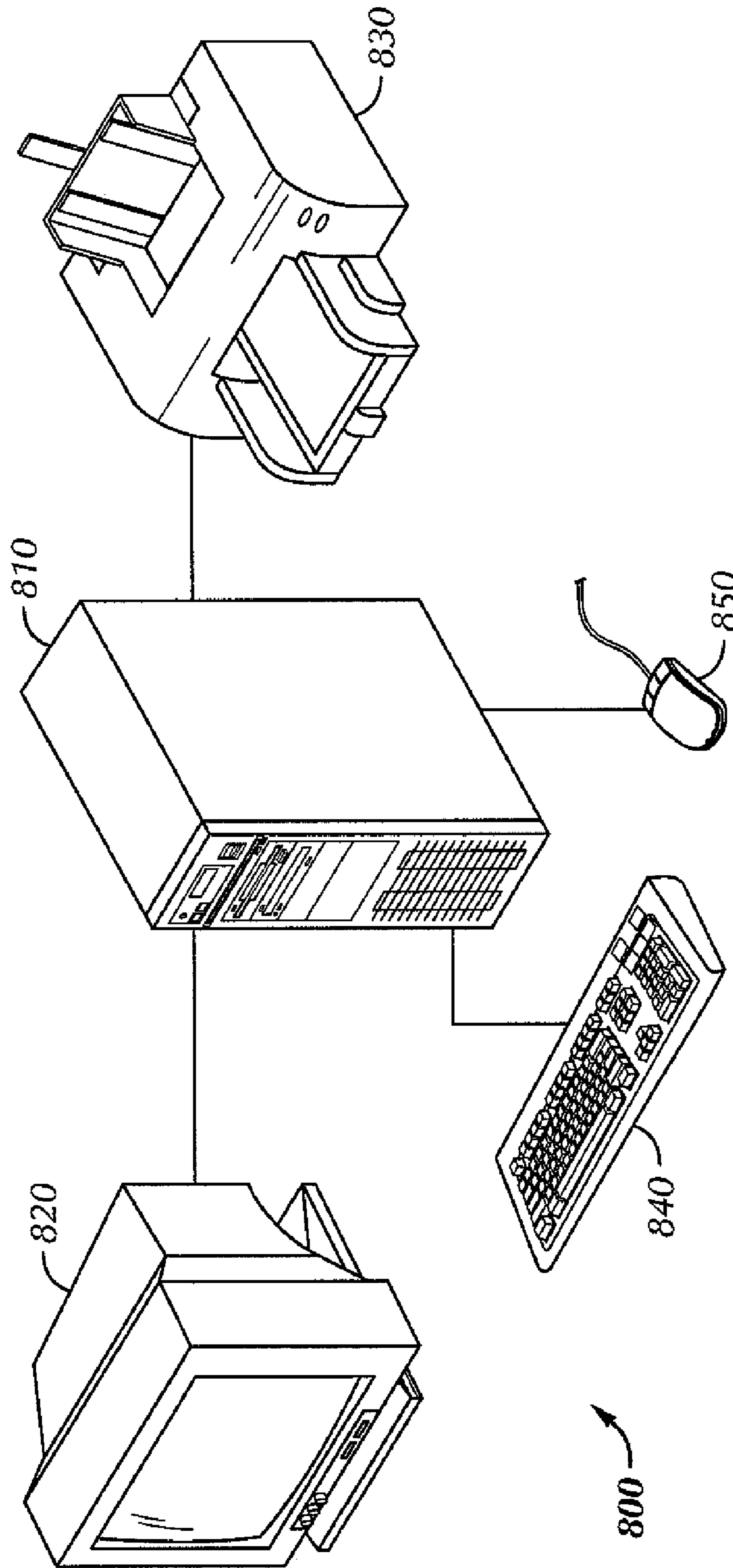


FIG. 8

## METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MEMORY REDUNDANCY IN A MICROPROCESSOR

### BACKGROUND

Modern microprocessors may include one or more cores that are capable of performing operations typically associated with a traditional central processing unit (CPU).

Referring to FIG. 1, a multi-core microprocessor 100 is shown, which comprises one or more die 120 disposed in a mechanical package 110. Each die is comprised of one or more cores 130, one or more primary cache memory arrays 140, one or more secondary cache memory arrays 150, and additional circuitry and connectivity necessary for the proper operation of the microprocessor.

The cache memory arrays comprise a plurality of cache lines comprised of a plurality of bits that are used to store previously accessed instructions or data. Cache memory arrays are typically comprised of fast Static Random Access Memory (SRAM). Cache memory arrays are differentiated by their place in the hierarchical organization of memory within a system. For example, level one (L1) refers to small instruction and/or data cache memory arrays disposed on the microprocessor die and level two (L2) refers to larger instruction and/or data cache memory arrays also disposed on the microprocessor die, but further removed from the core than L1. It is well understood in the art that the hierarchical organization of memory and the use of cache memory arrays reduces main memory latency and improves system performance.

Single-core microprocessors typically have dedicated L1 and L2 instruction and data caches disposed on die. Multi-core microprocessors typically have a mix of dedicated and shared cache memory arrays. For example, Sun Microsystems' high end microprocessor is comprised of four core clusters, each comprised of four cores, resulting in sixteen total cores. Each core within a given core cluster shares L1 instruction and data caches and all core clusters share L2 instruction and data caches. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that there are a number of ways in which to organize cache memory arrays disposed in a microprocessor.

Application Specific Integrated Circuits (ASICs), Field-Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGAs), and other semiconductor devices are also comprised of memory arrays utilized for a variety of purposes.

The fabrication of a semiconductor device comprised of a memory array is complicated by defects that are inherent in the fabrication process. There may be a number of defective memory cells within the memory array. Additionally, there may be a number of memory cells that fail to meet minimum electrical requirements and are deemed to be defective. These defects could be a single defective memory cell or multiple defective memory cells. Multiple defective memory cells may be present in a given row and/or column of the memory array. Multiple defective memory cells may span one or more rows and/or one or more columns of the memory array.

Accordingly, certain redundancy schemes have utilized banks of fuses to disable defective cells and enable redundant cells. In post fabrication processing, the defective cells are disabled and redundant cells are enabled through the use of a laser, banks of fuses, and related circuitry. Typically, two banks of fuses are required. A first bank of fuses is utilized to disable defective cells. Defective cells are disabled by triggering one or more fuses with a laser to create open circuits. A second bank of fuses is utilized to enable redundant cells. Redundant cells are enabled by triggering one or more fuses

with a laser to create bridge circuits. Other prior art redundancy schemes have utilized shift registers.

### SUMMARY

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According to one aspect of one or more embodiments of the present invention, an apparatus for redundancy of a memory array comprising: a primary memory array comprising a plurality of memory cells wherein one or more memory cells of the primary array are defective; a redundant array comprising: a CAM array comprising a plurality of memory cells, wherein the addresses of the one or more defective memory locations within the primary array are stored, wherein the CAM array is addressed by the addresses of the one or more defective memory locations within the primary memory array, and wherein the CAM array provides a match identification to a translation array and a resource identification to a redundant data array, the translation array, wherein an offset that configures an input/output multiplexer is stored, wherein the translation array provides the offset to the input/output multiplexer, the redundant data array comprising a plurality of memory cells, wherein one or more memory cells of the redundant data array are used instead of one or more defective memory cells of the primary array; and the input/output multiplexer wherein the input/output multiplexer selectively presents data comprised of data from or to the primary memory array or data from or to the primary memory array and the redundant array.

According to one aspect of one or more embodiments of the present invention, a method for configuring a redundant array for redundancy of a memory array comprising: identifying a defective memory cell within a primary memory array; storing an address corresponding to the address of the defective memory cell within the primary memory array in a CAM array; storing a match identification corresponding to the address of the defective memory cell within the primary memory array in the CAM array; storing a resource identification corresponding to the match identification in the CAM array; and storing an offset corresponding to the resource identification in a translation array.

According to one aspect of one or more embodiments of the present invention, a method for redundancy of a memory array comprising: presenting an address of a memory location within a primary memory array to the primary memory array; presenting the address of the memory location within the primary memory array to a redundant array wherein the redundant array is comprised of a CAM array, a translation array, and a redundant data array; determining whether the address of the memory location within the primary memory array corresponds to a defective memory location within the primary memory array; if the address of the memory location within the primary memory array corresponds to the defective memory location within the primary memory array, presenting a match identification from the CAM array to the translation array, presenting a resource identification from the CAM array to the redundant data array, presenting an offset that corresponds to the resource identification from the translation array to an input/output multiplexer, configuring the input/output multiplexer in accordance with the offset, performing a read or write operation in accordance with the address of the memory location within the primary memory array to the redundant data array; performing the read or a write operation in accordance with the address of the memory location within the primary memory array to the primary memory array; and presenting data corresponding to the address of the memory location within the primary memory array in accordance with the read or write operation.

Other aspects of the present invention will be apparent from the following description and the appended claims.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 shows a microprocessor comprised of a plurality of memory arrays.

FIG. 2 shows an apparatus for redundancy of a memory array in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 shows an apparatus for column redundancy of a memory array in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4 shows an apparatus for row redundancy of a memory array in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 shows an apparatus for column and row redundancy of a memory array in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 6 shows a method of configuring a redundant array for redundancy of a memory array in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 7 shows a method for redundancy of a memory array in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 8 shows an apparatus for column and row redundancy of a memory array disposed in a system in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Specific embodiments of the present invention will now be described in detail with reference to the accompanying figures. Like elements in the various figures are denoted by like reference numerals for consistency. Further, in the following detailed description of embodiments of the present invention, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a more thorough understanding of the present invention. In other instances, well-known features have not been described in detail to avoid obscuring the description of embodiments of the present invention.

FIG. 2 shows an apparatus for redundancy of a memory array in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

A primary memory array 200 is comprised of a plurality of memory cells. One or more memory cells of the primary memory array 200 may be defective. Thus, a redundant array 220 comprised of a content-addressable memory (CAM) array 225, a translation array 230, and a redundant data array 250 and an input/output multiplexer 210 comprised of a plurality of multiplexers is also included. The CAM array 225 is configured to store defective memory cell locations within the primary memory array 200 and other data necessary as part of the redundancy scheme described in detail below. The translation array 230 is configured to store offset 250 in accordance with the defective memory cell locations stored in the CAM array 225. The translation array 230 could be a register file. An address 260 of a memory location within the primary memory array 200 is presented to the primary memory array 200 and the redundant array 220 as part of a read or a write operation.

In the case of the read operation (from primary memory), the primary memory array 200 outputs data 270 to the input/output multiplexer 210 in accordance with the address 260 of the memory location within the primary memory array 200. If the address 260 of the memory location within the primary memory array 200 is present in the CAM array 225, the CAM array 225 presents a match identification 240 to the transla-

tion array 230 and a resource identification 245 to the redundant data array 235. The resource identification 245 may be the match identification 240. The translation array 230 presents an offset 250 to the input/output multiplexer 210 in accordance with the match identification 240. The redundant data array 235 utilizes the resource identification 245 and the address 260 of the memory location within the primary memory array 200 to output data 255 to the input/output multiplexer 210 in accordance with the read operation. The input/output multiplexer 210 utilizes the offset 250, data 270 from the primary memory array 200, and data 255 from the redundant data array 235 to output composite data 280. Composite data 280 is composed of data 270 or a combination of a subset of data 270 and data 255 in accordance with the offset 250.

In the case of a write operation (to primary memory), data 270 is input directly to the primary memory array 200 and composite data 280 is input to the input/output multiplexer 210 in accordance with the address 260 of the memory location within the primary memory array 200. Composite data 280 is data 270 for the purpose of the write operation. If the address 260 of the memory location within the primary memory array 200 is present in the CAM array 225, the CAM array 225 presents the match identification 240 to the translation array 230 and the resource identification 245 to the redundant data array 235. The translation array 230 utilizes the match identification 240 to present the offset 250 to the input/output multiplexer 210. The input/output multiplexer 210 utilizes the offset 250 to selectively output a subset of composite data 280 to the redundant data array 235. The redundant data array 235 utilizes the resource identification 245 and the address 260 of the memory location within the primary memory array 200 to input data 255 from the input/output multiplexer 210 to the redundant data array 235 in accordance with the write operation.

FIG. 3 shows an apparatus for column redundancy of a memory array in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

A primary memory array 300 is comprised of a plurality of memory cells. The primary memory array 300 could be organized as a 1024-line, 64-bits-per-line, 8-way cache array. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that a set-associative cache scheme divides a cache array into equal sections called ways that each function as a small direct-mapped cache array. The primary memory array 300 could be logically divided into a plurality of sub-blocks 302 of 128-lines, 128-bits-per-line arrays. One or more memory cells of the primary memory array 300 may be defective. Thus, a redundant array 305 comprised of a CAM array 310, a translation array 315, and a redundant data array 320 and an input/output multiplexer 325 is also included.

The CAM array 310 is organized as a 4-line, 6-bits-per-line array. The CAM array 310 is configured to store defective memory cell locations within the primary memory array 300 and other data necessary as part of the redundancy scheme described in detail below. The translation array 315 is organized as a 4-line, 8-bits-per-line array in a one hot encoded configuration. The translation array 315 is configured to store offset 370 in accordance with the defective memory cell locations stored in the CAM array 310. As such, the translation array 315 provides an offset 370 to the input/output multiplexer 325 that selects one of eight sets of 8-bits in the 64-bit row. The translation array 315 could be a register file. The redundant data array 320 is organized as a 4-resource, 128-lines-per-resource, 8-bits-per-line array. An input/output multiplexer 325 is comprised of an input multiplexer 335 and an output multiplexer 330. One of ordinary skill in the art will

appreciate that the primary memory array **300**, sub-blocks **302**, CAM array **310**, translation array **315**, and redundant data array **320** could be organized in various other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

An address of a memory location within the primary memory array **300** is comprised of 13-bits that could be logically divided into three groups, ADDR[9:3] **340**, ADDR[2:0] **345**, and WAY[2:0] **350**, to clarify the operation of one or more embodiments of the present invention. The 10-bits represented by ADDR[9:3] **340** and ADDR[2:0] **345** can uniquely identify one of the 1024 lines of the primary memory array **300**. The 3-bits represented by WAY[2:0] **350** can uniquely identify one of the eight ways of the primary memory array **300**. The address, ADDR[9:3] **340**, ADDR[2:0] **345**, and WAY[2:0] **350**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **300** is presented to the primary memory array **300** as part of a read or write operation. A portion, ADDR[2:0] **345** and WAY[2:0] **350**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **300** is presented to the CAM array **310** as part of the read or write operation. A portion, ADDR[9:3] **340**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **300** is presented to the redundant data array **320** as part of the read or write operation.

In the case of the read operation, the primary memory array **300** outputs 64-bits of data **365** to the output multiplexer **330** in accordance with the address, ADDR[9:3] **340**, ADDR[2:0] **345**, and WAY[2:0] **350**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **300**. If a portion, ADDR[2:0] **345** and WAY[2:0] **350**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **300** is present in the CAM array **310**, the CAM array **310** presents a 4-bit match identification **355** to the translation array **315** to select one of the four lines called offset **370**, each of which can have a value as that shown in Table 1. In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the match identification **355** is one-hot encoded, meaning the possible combinations are {0001, 0010, 0100, and 1000}. The translation array **315** presents an 8-bit offset **370** to the output multiplexer **330** as shown in Table 1. Once configured by the offset **370**, the output multiplexer **330**, in accordance with Table 1, allows for the replacement of 8-bits of the 64-bit row provided by the primary memory array **300** with 8-bits of data from the redundant data array **320** to produce 64-bit composite data **385** as described in detail below. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the offset **370** and output multiplexer **330** could be configured in a variety of other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

TABLE 1

Offset Configuration of Multiplexer.	
Offset [7:0]	Resulting Multiplexer Configuration
00000001	b0/b2/b4/b6/b8/b10/b12/b14
00000010	b16/b18/b20/b22/b24/b26/b28/b30
00000100	b1/b3/b5/b7/b9/b11/b13/b15
00001000	b17/b19/b21/b23/b25/b27/b29/b31
00010000	b32/b34/b36/b38/b40/b42/b44/b46
00100000	b48/b50/b52/b54/b56/b58/b60/b62
01000000	b33/b35/b37/b39/b41/b43/b45/b47
10000000	b49/b51/b53/b55/b57/b59/b61/b63

The CAM array **310** presents the resource identification **360** to the redundant data array **320**. The resource identification **360** could be the match identification **355**. The redundant data

array **320** utilizes the resource identification **360** to select one of the four resources of the redundant data array **320**. The redundant data array **320** utilizes a portion, ADDR[9:3] **340**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **300** corresponding to the selected resource to output an 8-bit line of data **380** to the output multiplexer **330** in accordance with the read operation. The output multiplexer **330** utilizes the offset **370**, 64-bits of data **365** from the primary memory array, and 8-bits of data **380** from the redundant data array **320**, to output 64-bit composite data **385**. Composite data **385** is composed of data **365** or data **365** with 8-bits selectively replaced with data **380** in accordance with the offset **370** provided to the input/output multiplexer **325**.

In the case of the write operation, data **365** is input directly to the primary memory array **300** and composite data **385** is input to the input multiplexer **335** in accordance with the address, ADDR[9:3] **340**, ADDR[2:0] **345**, and WAY[2:0] **350**, of a memory location within the primary memory array **300**. Composite data **385** is data **365** for the purpose of the write operation. If a portion, ADDR[2:0] **345** and WAY[2:0] **350**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **300** is present in the CAM array **310**, the CAM array **310** presents a match identification **355** to the translation array **315** and a resource identification **360** to the redundant data array **320**. The translation array **315** utilizes the match identification **355** to present an offset **370** to the input multiplexer **335**. The input multiplexer **335** utilizes the offset **370** to selectively output one of eight sets of 8-bits of composite data **385** to the redundant data array **320**. The redundant data array **320** utilizes the resource identification **360** and a portion, ADDR[9:3] **340**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **300** to input data **380** from the input multiplexer **335** to the redundant array **320** in accordance with the write operation.

FIG. 4 shows an apparatus for row redundancy of a memory array in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

A primary memory array **400** is comprised of a plurality of memory cells. The primary memory array **400** could be organized as a 1024-line, 64-bits-per-line, 8-way cache array. The primary memory array **400** could be logically divided into a plurality of sub-blocks **402** of 128-lines, 128-bits-per-line arrays. One or more memory cells of the primary memory array **400** may be defective. Thus, a redundant array **405** comprised of a CAM array **410**, a translation array **415**, and a redundant data array **420** and an input/output multiplexer **425** is also included.

The CAM array **410** is organized as a 4-line, 11-bits-per-line array. The CAM array **410** is configured to store defective memory cell locations within the primary memory array **400** and other data necessary as part of the redundancy scheme described in detail below. The translation array **415** is organized as a 4-line, 4-bits-per-line array in a one hot encoded configuration. The translation array **415** is configured to store offset **470** in accordance with the defective memory cell locations stored in the CAM array **410**. As such, the translation array **415** provides an offset **470** to the input/output multiplexer **425** that selects one of four sets of 16-bits in the 64-bit row. The translation array **415** could be a register file. The redundant data array **420** is organized as a 4-resource, 4-lines-per-resource, 16-bits-per-line array. An input/output multiplexer **425** is comprised of an input multiplexer **435** and an output multiplexer **430**. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the primary memory array **400**, sub-blocks **402**, CAM array **410**, translation array **415**, and redundant

data array **420** could be organized in various other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

An address of a memory location within the primary memory array **400** is comprised of 13-bits that could be logically divided into three groups, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and WAY[2:0] **450**, to clarify the operation of one or more embodiments of the present invention. The 10-bits represented by ADDR[9:3] **440** and ADDR[2:0] **445** can uniquely identify one of the 1024 lines of the primary memory array **400**. The 3-bits represented by WAY[2:0] **450** can uniquely identify one of the eight ways of the primary memory array **400**. The address, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and WAY[2:0] **450**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **400** is presented to the primary memory array **400** as part of the read or write operation. The address, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and a portion of WAY[2:0] **450**, of a memory location within the primary memory array **400** is presented to the CAM array **410** as part of the read or write operation. A portion, part of WAY[2:0] **450**, of the address of a memory location within the primary memory array **400** and resource identification **460** is presented to the redundant data array **420** as part of a read or write operation.

In the case of the read operation, the primary memory array **400** outputs 64-bits of data **465** to the output multiplexer **430** in accordance with the address, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and WAY[2:0] **450**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **400**. If the address, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and WAY[2:0] **450**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **400** is present in the CAM array **410**, the CAM array **410** presents a 4-bit match identification **455** to the translation array **415** to select one of the four lines called offset **470**, each of which can have a value as that shown in Table 2. In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the match identification **455** is one-hot encoded, meaning the possible combinations are {0001, 0010, 0100, and 1000}. The translation array **415** presents a 4-bit offset **470** to the output multiplexer **430**. Once configured by the offset **470**, the output multiplexer **430**, in accordance with Table 2, allows for the replacement of 16-bits of the 64-bit row provided by the primary memory array **400** with 16-bits of data from the redundant data array **420** to produce 64-bit composite data **485** as described in detail below. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the offset **470** and multiplexer **430** could be configured in a variety of other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

TABLE 2

Offset Configuration for Multiplexer.	
Offset[3:0]	Resulting Multiplexer Configuration
0001	b0/b2/b4/b6/b8/b10/b12/b14 b16/b18/b20/b22/b24/b26/b28/b30
0010	b1/b3/b5/b7/b9/b11/b13/b15 b17/b19/b21/b23/b25/b27/b29/b31
0100	b32/b34/b36/b38/b40/b42/b44/b46 b48/b50/b52/b54/b56/b58/b60/b62
1000	b33/b35/b37/b39/b41/b43/b45/b47 b49/b51/b53/b55/b57/b59/b61/b63

The CAM array **410** presents the resource identification **460** to the redundant data array **420**. The resource identification **460** could be the match identification **455**. The redundant data array **420** utilizes the resource identification **460** to select one

of the four resources of the redundant data array **420**. The redundant data array **420** utilizes a portion, part of WAY[2:0] **450**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **400** corresponding to the selected resource to output a 16-bit line of data **480** to the output multiplexer **430** in accordance with the read operation. The output multiplexer **430** utilizes the offset **470**, 64-bits of data **465** from the primary memory array, and 16-bits of data **480** from the redundant data array **420**, to output 64-bits composite data **485**. Composite data **485** is composed of data **465** or data **465** with 16-bits selectively replaced with data **480** in accordance with the offset **470** provided to the input/output multiplexer **425**.

In the case of the write operation, data **465** is input directly to the primary memory array **400** and composite data **485** is input to the input multiplexer **435** in accordance with the address, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and WAY[2:0] **450**, of a memory location within the primary memory array **400**. Composite data **485** is data **465** for the purpose of the write operation. The input multiplexer **435** outputs data **465** to the primary memory array **400** in accordance with the address, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and WAY[2:0] **450**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **400**. If the address, ADDR[9:3] **440**, ADDR[2:0] **445**, and WAY[2:0] **450**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **400** is present in the CAM array **410**, the CAM array **410** presents a match identification **455** to the translation array **415** and a resource identification **460** to the redundant data array **420**. The translation array **415** utilizes the match identification **455** to present an offset **470** to the input multiplexer **435**. The input multiplexer **435** utilizes the offset **470** to selectively output one of four groups of 16-bits of composite data **485** to the redundant data array **420**. The redundant data array **420** utilizes the resource identification **460** and a portion, part of WAY[2:0] **450**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **400** to input data **480** from the input multiplexer **435** to the redundant data array **420** in accordance with the write operation.

FIG. 5 shows an apparatus for column and row redundancy of a memory array in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

A primary memory array **500** is comprised of a plurality of memory cells. The primary memory array **500** could be organized as a 1024-line, 64-bits-per-line, 8-way cache array. The primary memory array **500** could be logically divided into a plurality of sub-blocks **502** of 128-lines, 128-bits-per-line arrays. One or more memory cells of the primary memory array **500** may be defective. Thus, a column redundant array **505** comprised of a column CAM array **510**, a column translation array **515**, and a column redundant data array **520** is included. In addition, a row redundant array **535** comprised of a row CAM array **540**, a row translation array **545**, and a row redundant array **550** is included. Also, an input/output multiplexer **590** is included.

The column CAM array **510** is organized as a 4-line, 6-bits-per-line array. The column CAM array **510** is configured to store defective memory cell locations within the primary memory array **500** and other data necessary as part of the redundancy scheme described in detail below. The column translation array **515** is organized as a 4-line, 8-bits-per-line array in a one hot encoded configuration. The column translation array **515** is configured to store column offset **570** in accordance with the defective memory cell locations stored in the column CAM array **510**. As such, the column translation array **515** provides a column offset **570** to the input/output multiplexer **590** that selects one of eight sets of 8-bits in the 64-bit row. The column translation array **515** could be a

register file. The column redundant data array **320** is organized as a 4-resource, 128-lines-per-resource, 8-bits-per-line array.

The row CAM array **540** is organized as a 4-line, 11-bits-per-line array. The row CAM array **540** is configured to store defective memory cell locations within the primary memory array **500** and other data necessary as part of the redundancy scheme described in detail below. The row translation array **545** is organized as a 4-line, 4-bits-per-line array in a one hot encoded configuration. The row translation array **545** is configured to store row offset **575** in accordance with the defective memory cell locations stored in the row CAM array **540**. As such, the row translation array **545** provides a row offset **575** to the input/output multiplexer **590** that selects one of four sets of 16-bits in the 64-bit row. The row translation array **545** could be a register file. The row redundant data array **550** is organized as a 4-resource, 4-lines-per-resource, 16-bits-per-line array.

An input/output multiplexer **590** is comprised of input multiplexer **594** and output multiplexer **592**. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the primary memory array **500**, column CAM array **510**, column translation array **515**, column redundant data array **520**, row CAM array **540**, row translation array **545**, and row redundant array **550** could be organized in various other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

An address of a memory location within the primary memory array **500** is comprised of 13-bits that could be logically divided into three groups, ADDR[9:3] **596**, ADDR[2:0] **597**, and WAY[2:0] **598**, to clarify the operation of one or more embodiments of the present invention. The 10-bits represented by ADDR[9:3] **596** and ADDR[2:0] **597** can uniquely identify one of the 1024 lines of the primary memory array **500**. The 3-bits represented by WAY[2:0] **598** can uniquely identify one of the eight ways of the primary memory array **500**. The address, ADDR[9:3] **596**, ADDR[2:0] **597**, and WAY[2:0] **598**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** is presented to the primary memory array **500** as part of the read or write operation.

A portion, ADDR[2:0] **597** and WAY[2:0] **598**, of the address of a memory location within the primary memory array **500** is presented to the column CAM array **510** as part of the read or write operation. A portion, ADDR[9:3] **596**, of the address of a memory location within the primary memory array **500** is presented to the column redundant data array **520** as part of a read or write operation.

The address ADDR[9:3] **596**, ADDR[2:0] **597**, and WAY[2:0] **598** of a memory location within the primary memory array **500** is presented to the row CAM array **540** as part of the read or write operation. A portion, WAY[2:0] **598**, of the address of a memory location within the primary memory array **500** and resource identification **560** is presented to the row redundant data array **550** as part of a read or write operation.

In the case of the read operation, the primary memory array **500** outputs 64-bits of data **565** to the output multiplexer **592** in accordance with the address, ADDR[9:3] **596**, ADDR[2:0] **597**, and WAY[2:0] **598**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **500**.

If a portion, ADDR[2:0] **597** and WAY[2:0] **598**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** is present in the column CAM array **510**, the column CAM array **510** presents an 4-bit column match identification **525** to the column translation array **515** to select one of the four lines called column offset **570**, each of which can have a value as that shown in Table 1. In one or more embodiments, the column match identification **525** is one-hot

encoded, meaning the possible combinations are {0001, 0010, 0100, and 1000}. The column translation array **515** presents an 8-bit column offset **570** to the output multiplexer **592** as shown in Table 1. Once configured by the column offset **570**, the output multiplexer **592**, in accordance with Table 1, allows for the replacement of 8-bits of the 64-bit row provided by the primary memory array **500** with 8-bits of data from the column redundant data array **520** to produce 64-bit composite data **595** as described in detail below. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the column offset **570** could be configured in a variety of other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

The column CAM array **510** presents the column resource identification **530** to the column redundant data array **520**. The column resource identification **530** could be the column match identification **525**. The column redundant data array **520** utilizes the column resource identification **530** to select one of the four resources of the column redundant data array **520**. The column redundant data array **520** utilizes a portion, ADDR[9:3] **596**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** corresponding to the selected resource to output 8-bits of data **580** to the output multiplexer **592** in accordance with the read operation. The output multiplexer **592** utilizes the column offset **570**, 64-bits of data **565** from the primary memory array **500**, and 8-bits of column data **580** from the column redundant data array **520**, to output 64-bits composite data **595**. Composite data **595** is composed of data **565** or data **565** with 8-bits selectively replaced with column data **580** in accordance with the column offset **570** provided to the input/output multiplexer **590**.

If the address, ADDR[9:3] **596**, ADDR[2:0] **597**, and WAY[2:0] **598**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** is present in the row CAM array **540**, the row CAM array **540** presents a 4-bit row match identification **555** to the row translation array **545** to select one of the four lines called row offset **575**, each of which can have a value as that shown in Table 2. In one or more embodiments, the row match identification **555** is one-hot encoded, meaning the possible combinations are {0001, 0010, 0100, and 1000}. The row translation array **545** presents a 4-bit row offset **575** to the output multiplexer. Once configured by the row offset **575**, the output multiplexer **592**, in accordance with Table 2, allows for the replacement of 16-bits of the 64-bit row provided by the primary memory array **500** with 16-bits of row data from the row redundant data array **550** to produce 64-bit composite data **595** as described in more detail below. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that row offset **575** and output multiplexer **592** could be configured in a variety of other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

The row CAM array **540** presents the row resource identification **560** to the row redundant data array **550**. The row resource identification **560** could be the row match identification **555**. The row redundant data array **550** utilizes the row resource identification **560** to select one of the four resources of the row redundant array **550**. The row redundant data array **550** utilizes a portion, part of WAY[2:0] **598**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** corresponding to the selected resource to output a 16-bit line of row data **585** to the output multiplexer **592** in accordance with the read operation. The output multiplexer **592** utilizes the row offset **575**, 64-bits of data **565** from the primary memory array, and 16-bits of row data **585** from the row redundant data array **550**, to output 64-bits composite data **595**. Composite data **595** is composed of data **565** or data **565**

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with 16-bits selectively replaced with row data **585** in accordance with the row offset **575** provided to the input/output multiplexer **590**.

One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that data from the column redundant data array and the row redundant data array could be output as part of the same read operation in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention. In that case, composite data **595** could be composed of data **565** with 8-bits selectively replaced with column data **580** and 16-bits selectively replaced with row data **585**.

In the case of a write operation, data **565** is input directly to the primary memory array **500** and composite data **595** is input to the input multiplexer **594** in accordance with the address, ADDR[9:3] **596**, ADDR[2:0] **597**, and WAY[2:0] **598**, of a memory location within the primary memory array **500**.

If a portion, ADDR[2:0] **597** and WAY[2:0] **598**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** is present in the column CAM array **510**, the column CAM array **510** presents a column match identification **525** to the column translation array **515** and a column resource identification **530** to the column redundant data array **520**. The column translation array **515** utilizes the column match identification **525** to present a column offset **570** to the input multiplexer **594**. The input multiplexer **594** utilizes the column offset **570** to selectively output one of the eight sets of 8-bits of composite data **595** to the column redundant array **520**. The column redundant data array **520** utilizes the column resource identification **530** and a portion, ADDR[9:3] **596**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** to input column data **580** from the input multiplexer **594** to the column redundant data array **520** in accordance with the read operation.

If the address, ADDR[9:3] **596**, ADDR[2:0] **597**, and WAY[2:0] **598**, of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** is present in the row CAM array **540**, the row CAM array **540** presents a row match identification **555** to the row translation array **545** and a row resource identification **560** to the row redundant data array **550**. The row translation array **545** utilizes the row match identification **555** to present a row offset **575** to the input multiplexer **594**. The input multiplexer **594** utilizes the row offset **575** to selectively output one of four groups of 16-bits of composite data **595** to the row redundant data array **550**. The row redundant data array **550** utilizes the row resource identification **560** and a portion, part of WAY[2:0] **598**, of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array **500** to input row data **585** from the input multiplexer **594** to the row redundant array **550** in accordance with the write operation.

One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that data from the column redundant data array and the row redundant data array could be input as part of the same write operation in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

FIG. 6 shows a method for configuring a redundant array for redundancy of a memory array in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

In **S1**, a defective memory location within a primary memory array is identified. A defective memory location means a memory location that is defective from an inherent defect incurred during the fabrication process or a memory location that fails to meet minimum electrical requirements. A defective memory cell could be identified through the use of a Built-In Self Test (BIST) mechanism within the device that contains the memory array. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that a defective memory cell could be identi-

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fied through various other manners in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

In **S2**, an address of the defective memory location within the primary memory array is stored in a CAM array. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the CAM array is an associative array in which the array is addressed by search data. In this case, the search data is the address of the defective memory location within the primary memory array.

In **S3**, a match identification corresponding to the address of the defective memory location within the primary memory array is stored in the CAM array. Thus, when an address of a defective memory location within the primary memory array is presented to the CAM array, if the address is present in the CAM array, the CAM array returns the corresponding match identification.

In **S4**, an offset corresponding to the match identification is stored in a translation array.

One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that steps **S1** through **S4** could be repeated as necessary to identify all defective memory locations within the primary memory array.

FIG. 7 shows a method for memory redundancy in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

In **S1**, an address of a memory location within a primary memory array is presented to the primary memory array. The address is comprised of enough bits to uniquely identify the memory location within the primary memory array. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the address is presented as part of a read or write operation.

In **S2**, the address of the memory location within the primary memory array is presented to a redundant array. The redundant array is comprised of a CAM array, a translation array, and a redundant array. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the address is presented as part of the read or write operation.

In **S3**, a determination is made as to whether the address of the memory location within the primary memory array corresponds to a defective memory location within the primary memory by the presence of the address of the memory location within the primary array in the CAM array. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the address of defective memory locations within the primary array could be configured in the CAM array in accordance with the method shown in FIG. 6.

In **S4**, an evaluation is made as to whether the address of the memory location within the primary array corresponds to the defective memory location within the primary memory array stored in the CAM array. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that presenting the address of the memory location within the primary array to the CAM array results in a match or not, which could form the basis for the evaluation.

In **S5**, upon an affirmative evaluation that the address of the memory location within the primary array corresponds to the defective memory location within the primary memory array stored in the CAM array, the CAM array presents a match identification to the translation array and a resource identification to the redundant data array.

In **S6**, the translation array presents an offset to the input/output multiplexer.

In **S7**, the input/output multiplexer is configured in accordance with the offset. The input/output multiplexer could be configured to utilize some, all, or none of the read or write data from or to the redundant data array.

In **S8**, the primary memory array, redundant array, and input/output multiplexer are appropriately addressed and configured. Thus, a read or write operation in accordance with

the location within the primary memory array is directed to the primary memory array and the redundant data array.

In **S9**, upon a negative evaluation that the address of the memory location within the primary array corresponds to the defective memory location within the primary memory array stored in the CAM array, a read or write operation in accordance with the address of the location within the primary memory array is directed to the primary memory array.

FIG. **8** shows an apparatus for column and row redundancy of a memory array disposed in a computer system in accordance with one or more embodiments of the present invention.

A computer system **800** includes several components that are collectively used by a user to perform various functions such as, for example, generating a document with a word processor. The user may input data to a computing portion **810** using peripheral devices such as a keyboard **840** or a mouse **850**. Data may also be provided to the computing portion **810** using data storage devices (e.g., a floppy disk, fixed disk, flash device, CD, DVD, etc.). The computing portion **810**, using memory and other internal components, processes both internal data and data provided to the computing portion **810** by the user to generate data requested by the user. The generated data may be provided to the user via a display device **820** or a printer **830**.

The computing portion **810** typically includes various components such as one or more power supplies, one or more data storage devices, one or more microprocessors, and one or more circuit boards containing circuitry required to perform the necessary and requested operations of the computer system **800**. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that one or more elements of the computer system **800** may take various other forms and may be located at a remote location and connected to the other elements over a network.

Those skilled in the art, having the benefit of this detailed description, will appreciate that the method and apparatus for memory redundancy may be used advantageously to provide redundancy for defective memory cells within a primary memory array. Advantages of one or more embodiments of the present invention may include one or more of the following.

In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the method and apparatus for memory redundancy is more efficient and flexible because it provides soft programmable repair resources. Software may be used to program repairs during production testing or anytime during the lifetime of the product.

In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the method and apparatus for memory redundancy is more efficient and flexible because the repair resources may be shared without a fixed address space. As such, redundant memory elements may be shared by a larger memory space than typical shift register schemes, and as a consequence, improve the yield.

In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the method and apparatus for memory redundancy provides for improved granularity of repair. Memory redundancy may be provided for a portion of a memory array line instead of replacing the entire memory array line. Additionally, different sections of the memory array line may be repaired by row redundancy, column redundancy, or both.

In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the method and apparatus for memory redundancy may be used advantageously wherein the primary memory array and redundant array share the same address space.

In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the method and apparatus for memory redundancy may be used advantageously without negatively impacting memory timing or performance.

In one or more embodiments of the present invention, the method and apparatus for memory redundancy may be used advantageously to minimize the area and routing overhead required to implement a redundancy scheme.

While the invention has been described with respect to a limited number of embodiments, those skilled in the art, having the benefit of this disclosure, will appreciate that other embodiments can be devised which do not depart from the scope of the invention as disclosed herein. Accordingly, the scope of the invention should be limited only by the attached claims.

What is claimed is:

**1.** An apparatus for redundancy of a memory array comprising:

a primary memory array comprising a plurality of memory cells wherein one or more memory cells of the primary array are defective;

a redundant array comprising:

a CAM array comprising a plurality of memory cells, wherein the addresses of the one or more defective memory locations within the primary array are stored,

wherein the CAM array is addressed by the addresses of the one or more defective memory locations within the primary memory array, and

wherein the CAM array provides a match identification to a translation array and a resource identification to a redundant data array,

the translation array,

wherein an offset that configures an input/output multiplexer is stored,

wherein the translation array provides the offset to the input/output multiplexer,

the redundant data array comprising a plurality of memory cells,

wherein one or more memory cells of the redundant data array are used instead of one or more defective memory cells of the primary array; and

the input/output multiplexer wherein the input/output multiplexer selectively presents data comprised of data from or to the primary memory array or data from or to the primary memory array and the redundant array.

**2.** The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the CAM array and translation array are configured prior to the operation of the redundant array.

**3.** The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the resource identification is the match identification.

**4.** The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the translation array could be comprised of a register file.

**5.** The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the input/output multiplexer could be comprised of a plurality of multiplexers.

**6.** The apparatus of claim **1**, wherein the apparatus is disposed in a microprocessor, ASIC, FPGA, or other semiconductor device.

**7.** The apparatus of claim **6**, wherein the primary memory array is an instruction or data cache.

**8.** The apparatus of claim **6**, wherein the microprocessor, ASIC, FPGA, or other semiconductor device is disposed in a system.

**9.** The apparatus of claim **7**, wherein the semiconductor is disposed in a computer system comprising a display device, an input device, and a computing apparatus.



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10. A method for configuring a redundant array for redundancy of a memory array comprising:

identifying a defective memory cell within a primary memory array;

storing an address corresponding to the address of the defective memory cell within the primary memory array in a CAM array;

storing a match identification corresponding to the address of the defective memory cell within the primary memory array in the CAM array;

storing a resource identification corresponding to the match identification in the CAM array; and

storing an offset corresponding to the resource identification in a translation array.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the translation array could be comprised of a register file.

12. The method of claim 10, further comprising identifying the defective memory cell through the use of a built-in self-test (BIST).

13. A method for redundancy of a memory array comprising:

presenting an address of a memory location within a primary memory array to the primary memory array;

presenting the address of the memory location within the primary memory array to a redundant array wherein the redundant array is comprised of a CAM array, a translation array, and a redundant data array;

determining whether the address of the memory location within the primary memory array corresponds to a defective memory location within the primary memory array;

if the address of the memory location within the primary memory array corresponds to the defective memory location within the primary memory array,

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presenting a match identification from the CAM array to the translation array,

presenting a resource identification from the CAM array to the redundant data array,

presenting an offset that corresponds to the resource identification from the translation array to an input/output multiplexer,

configuring the input/output multiplexer in accordance with the offset,

performing a read or write operation in accordance with the address of the memory location within the primary memory array to the redundant data array;

performing the read or a write operation in accordance with the address of the memory location within the primary memory array to the primary memory array; and

presenting data corresponding to the address of the memory location within the primary memory array in accordance with the read or write operation.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the resource identification is the match identification.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the method is utilized for column redundancy.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein the method is utilized for row redundancy.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the method is utilized for column and row redundancy.

18. The method of claim 13, wherein the address of the memory location comprises a row address and a column address.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the address of the memory location further comprises a way address.

20. The method of claim 13, wherein the determination is made by the presenting of the address of the memory location within the primary memory array to the CAM array.

\* \* \* \* \*